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ABSTRACT

Presented is a description of the operational procedures of a model resource center for educationally handicapped elementary school children in Colorado and the replication strategy to be used. Emphasized are the differentiated staffing patterns. Appended are tables of statistical data and evaluation forms. (IM)

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MODEL RESOURCE CENTER FOR CHILDREN WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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A Cooperative Project between

Adams County #50 Public Schools

Westminster, Colorado

Iver C. Ranum, Superintendent

and

Colorado Department of Education

Pupil Personnel Unit

Dr. Donald D. Woodington, Commissioner

and

University of Northern Colorado

School of Special Education and Rehabilitation

Dr. Daniel C. McAfee, Dean

January, 1972

Denver, Colorado

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MODEL RESOURCE CENTER FOR CHILDREN WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

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Denver, Colorado

January, 1972

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Colorado Department of Education

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Foreword

The purpose of this handbook is to inform the reader of the rationale behind the model resource center and to provide an overview of the differentiated staffing patterns. This booklet offers a description of the operational procedures of the center and of replication strategy to be used to multiply the effect of the center in Colorado.

Demographic Description:

The site of the model resource center for educationally handicapped students is at Adams County School District #50 in Westminster, Colorado. Westminster is on the northwestern border of Denver. The population of Westminster is 30,000 with a school population of 17,000. The average per-capita income is $10,000. The largest minority group in the schools are Spanish-surnamed students which comprise a little more than 10 percent of the school population. Students of Oriental ancestry make up more than one percent of the student population with American Indians and Blacks representing less than one-half of one percent each of the total school population.

The model resource center staff serves three schools--Baker and Harris Park Elementary Schools and Shaw Primary School. Two of these schools--Baker and Harris Park--are Title I schools. The total student population of the three schools is 1187 with a teaching staff total of 70. The primary services of the model resource staff is to the sixty students who attend the resource center.

Physical facilities of the center

a. The project is housed in a 22" x 60" steel building located behind Harris Park Elementary School at 4300 West 75th Avenue in Westminster, Colorado.

b. The building is fully carpeted and has one internal wall dividing the team work area (22' x 22') from the instructional area (22' x 38'). This wall includes a window so that the instructional area can be viewed from the teacher area.

c. A small room for individual testing has been partitioned in the

team work area and this room also serves as a "crisis" room as needed.

Theory

The underlying theory upon which the Resource Center is based is that the etiology of an Educational Handicap or of a Learning Disability, that leads only to labeling, is of little significance in determining the intervention techniques that are appropriate to remedy the child's particular educational deficiencies. Intervention procedures should be eclectic in nature and be devised for the individual child on the basis of differential diagnosis, prescriptive programming, specialized teaching techniques and continuing re-evaluation to determine effectiveness.

Educational intervention techniques should maintain and enhance the self concept of each individual child. The educational setting should avoid the pitfall of negative labels since the child should see himself as a desirable acceptable member of his own society. If the child is segregated from his educational needs, he is marked by his peers, his parents, teachers, and more importantly by himself as a sub-standard or different. The Resource Center approach allows the child to see himself as more like his peers. The successful experiences provided in the Resource Center setting has enhanced self esteem and self image of each child.

Any model for educational intervention must provide a total therapeutic milieu for the child with learning disabilities if it is to be fully effective. All people important to the child should be aware of the learning disability as diagnosed and involved in the planning and implementation of the prescriptive program. They should be working toward a common goal of providing a total educational and psychological environment that is supportive to the child. The team approach used at the Resource Center provides total milieu therapy.

The Resource Center model involves more than one specialist and makes

use of differential staffing. The current explosion of expanded knowledge in the area of learning disabilities makes it virtually impossible for any one individual to achieve complete competence in the total field. A team of four teacher experts has provided a broader base of competency and knowledge in the area of individualized diagnosis prescriptive programming, specialized instruction, and educational evaluation.

The Resource Center model for educational intervention requires the involvement of regular classroom teachers as participants in the prescriptive program. Since the classroom teacher shares the responsibility for the education of any child enrolled in the Center, he too must be aware of the diagnosis and the prescribed course of action. He, too, must apply the techniques when they are within his ability and are appropriate. Such involvement by the regular classroom teacher provides a "spin-off" effect for other children in his classroom.

The Resource Center for educational intervention involves the parents of the child with learning disabilities since an understanding of the child's problems allows the parent to better accept the child. A knowledge of the prescriptive program allows the parent to participate in many phases of the program. It is also the feeling of the Resource Center staff that such participation by the parent is necessary to build an adequate self concept in the child.

Model

Description of the Resource Center: As a model for intervention that can be used statewide the Resource Center is an excellent one. The concept of the four teacher specialists with differentiated roles draws attention to the four processes necessary for effective educational intervention. These four processes can best be carried out by four separate learning specialists.

a. Four teacher experts are operating as a team each specializing in one of the following areas:

1. Educational Diagnosis--Tim Roberts--selecting, devising, administering and interpreting diagnostic instruments; training others in their use.

2. Prescriptive programming--Esther Brown--relating diagnostic findings to educational techniques; selecting, devising, recommending and testing educational materials for individual children and specific groups of children.

3. Implementing instruction--Clare Ahnstedt--carrying out the programmer's recommendations; arranging schedules, groups, and changing these when needed; training teachers and aides to utilize specialized and innovative methods.

4. Educational evaluation--Janet Reiss--recording students' responses and progress; selecting and devising techniques to rate and measure the effectiveness of instruction, attitudinal changes, and behavioral changes; recommending additional efforts in any area when indicated.

b. Four teacher aides are assisting the four teachers in their activities, functioning under teacher supervision in the following roles: instructional aides(2); materials aide(1); communications aide(1).

c. The Supervisor of Educationally Handicapped Program is serving:

1. Consultant for the center

2. Supervisor of the team

d. A school district psychologist also provides service to the center on a regular schedule.

e. Counseling service is being provided by counselors assigned to schools involved in the project.

f. The school nurse assigned by the district to project schools is serving

as medical consultant and conducting home visits to obtain family information.

g. The speech correctionist assigned by the district to schools provides services to referred project students.

Resource Center Procedures

Pupil Characteristics and Criteria for Selecting:

a. Criteria for selection: The criterion for selection of the project are those children between the ages of 5 and 9 who qualify as educationally handicapped as defined by the Colorado Department of Education, Division of Special Education Services, 1970 Manual:

"An educationally handicapped child is one whose behavior manifests itself in such a manner that it is likely to interfere with the child's own educational process or the educational process of others. Behavior should be thought of in the broad educational and psychological aspect of the term. In most instances there is an educationally significant discrepancy between his apparent capacity for language or communicative behavior and his actual level of performance." (Administrative Procedures for the Special Education Program, Colorado Department of Education, Denver, Colorado, 1970, p 3.)

b. The project is explained to classroom teachers who refer students for participation in the project.

c. Team teachers administer a series of screening tests to referred students, including:

1. Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test
2. Peabody Individual Achievement Test
3. Auditory Discrimination Tests
4. Hearing and Vision Screen Tests
5. Additional screening procedures as needed.

d. After screening, the team meets with each classroom teacher to discuss the referred student and either reject or grant preliminary acceptance in the project, considering both need and prognosis.

e. If preliminary acceptance is granted, parents are contacted for their permission to further evaluate their child for participation in the project.

f. The school nurse makes a home visit to obtain family information.

g. The student is observed in the regular classroom.

h. The student is given tests for the purpose of educational diagnosis, including:

1. Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC)
2. Illinois Test of Psycholinguistic Abilities (ITPA)
3. Picture Story Language Test
4. Purdue Perceptual Motor Survey
5. Gates-McKillop Diagnostic Reading Test
6. Beery Visual - Motor Integration Test
7. Other relevant instruments

i. A major staffing is held, including the school principal, classroom teacher, school nurse, psychologist, and resource team. This staffing determines:

1. Acceptance of student in the project.
2. Recommendations for the school and regular classroom teacher.
3. Family recommendations.
4. Programming recommendations for the resource center.

j. The team cooperatively designs an educational program for the student based on the educational diagnosis and staffing recommendations.

k. Efforts are made to help the classroom teacher meet the educational needs of the student. The resource team:

1. Provides the classroom teacher with relevant information about the

child and cooperatively develops instructional programs.

2. Assists the classroom teacher in modifying the classroom schedule by grade level re-grouping of the students according to reading disability for one hour per day.
3. Assists the classroom teacher in individualizing instruction by classroom visitation and teaching in that class, to encourage the classroom teacher to teach to the students' strengths.
4. Assists the classroom teacher in behavior observation, interpretation, and modification techniques.
5. Provides the classroom teacher with specialized techniques, activities, and materials for use in the classroom.
6. Provides opportunities for the classroom teacher to observe and participate in activities in the resource center, e.g., one classroom of second graders comes to the center for small group instruction.
7. Conducts classroom teacher inservice meetings designed to increase teacher competence in identifying and remediating learning difficulties.
8. Provide opportunities during the school day and on an after school or evening basis for the parents and classroom teachers to meet together with the resource center staff and talk about the children involved in the center.

1. Resource center activities are scheduled in 45 to 60 minute time blocks per day, with each student spending time in the center depending on individual needs.

Goals and Objectives of the Resource Center

Objectives: The major goal of the ongoing model is to ameliorate educational problems of elementary Ell school children. This center has shown that an educational resource center staffed with four teachers--expert in educational diagnosis, programming, implementation and evaluation--is a

proven method of achieving such a goal by achieving the following objectives:

a. To dismiss within one year 50 percent of the children enrolled as having adequate gains with no further need for center's service. (Of the 60 students in the project the previous year, only 7 of these students are now in the center).

b. Children will show gains of 9/10 of a year gain in academic achievement within one year.

c. All children deficient in psycholinguistic age will make a gain of three months per month for each month in the program or will be brought up to age level; or will be brought up in substitute areas to improve functioning in classroom performance.

d. Deficient areas of language skills or in channels of learning will improve three months per month for each month in the program or be brought up in substitute areas to improve functioning in classroom performance.

e. Fifty percent of the behaviors which interfere with a child's relating to adults and peers, attending to tasks at hand, study skills, getting along with other children in a non-disruptive manner, and enthusiasm for learning will be improved to the extent that the child can function adequately in the classroom.

At the final evaluation staffing, determination was made whether each student should be re-enrolled in the program next year or should be dismissed from the program.

Parent Participation in the Project

a. Parents are encouraged to participate in the project by conferring with the project team and visiting the resource center.

b. Parents are offered the opportunity to participate in parent discussion groups conducted by the team.

c. Parents are offered information on child behavior, child management, and

providing learning experiences in the home.

d. Parents are asked to provide the team with information about their child, behavior changes which they observe at home, and their own opinions of the project as it affects their child.

Training Procedures

The Model Resource Center has been selected to be replicated in Colorado by the use of funds from Title VI, Part G, of Public Law 91-230.

Multiplication Strategy: The first year will be both a planning year and an operational year.

During the first year two school districts will be chosen to replicate the model. They must agree to release a team of four teachers for training purposes for a period of time of ten weeks, and to act as a training station for two additional districts the second year. The option is available for the trainees to receive twelve hours of graduate credit for the training experience.

Districts will be encouraged to select experienced teachers for the project, but they must increase the total number of teachers for the Educationally Handicapped in the district - that is, they may not merely change the strategy of delivery of services to children by already existing teachers - they must expand the total program.

Each member of each team will train at the model Resource Center for a total of ten weeks in one of the specific roles of educational diagnosis, programming, implementation, or evaluation.

Following the training experience the two teams will each return to their respective districts to establish their own Resource Center.

The coordinator of the project will be available to the satellite centers to help each with their unique problems following their training sessions.

It is reasonable to see the appropriateness of such a system for each

of the fifty states.

Training package dissemination: The second prong of the proposed model is designed to aid participating districts in the utilization of the team approach after the training sequence has terminated. The training package will also serve a multiplier effect within the district. Films, videotapes, slides and other media will be made of the training methods and materials employed in the initial training year. These processes, materials, and methods will be replicated and packaged by the Rocky Mountain Special Education Instructional Materials Center (RMSEIMC) at Greeley. The RMSEIMC will then make these packages available to the participating centers and will also provide personnel to demonstrate these training packages.

The University of Northern Colorado, School of Special Education and Rehabilitation, is providing graduate credit as a practicum experience for trainees at the Model Resource Center under the supervision of Dr. H. Robert Reinert. The University provides supervision on a weekly basis during the ten-week period that the trainees attend the center.

APPENDIX B

Tables: Progress of Children Served

STUDENT POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS
AND MEAN WRAT GAIN BY MONTH

N	Months (Pre-Post)	Sex[1] Boy	Girl	Ethnicity[1] Anglo	Minority	Handicap Level[1] Mild	Moderate	Severe	Mean WRAT Gain (Months) Reading	Spelling	Arithmetic	Mean LQ
1	3	100	0	100	0	0	0	100	.00	7.00	10.00	.81
14	4	93	7	86	14	0	21	79	4.86	5.00	6.43	.92
43	5	74	26	65	35	7	7	86	4.95	6.00	4.51	.91
20	6	75	25	90	10	10	35	55	5.00	4.20	4.25	.88
85	7	73	27	93	7	14	41	45	7.05	4.92	6.52	.90
32	8	78	22	81	19	3	50	47	10.20	5.78	7.75	.85
						State-Wide Composite						
195	6.39	76	24	84	16	9	33	58	6.70	5.24	6.06	.89

[1]The figures under sex, ethnicity, and handicap level are percentages of students in those categories.

CORRELATIONS OF LEARNING QUOTIENTS AND GAIN SCORES ON THE WRAT (COMPOSITE)
N=195

	Variable Categories			
	LQ	Reading	Spelling	Arithmetic
Var. No.	1	2	3	4
1	1.0000	-0.1047	0.1179	-0.1304
2	-0.1047	1.0000	0.2691	0.0979
3	0.1179	0.2691	1.0000	-0.0366
4	-0.1304	0.0979	-0.0366	1.0000
Means	0.891	6.697	5.236	6.056
Std.Dev.	0.117	7.544	6.440	7.352

CORRELATIONS OF LEARNING QUOTIENTS AND GAIN SCORES ON THE WRAT (4-MONTH PROGRAM)
N=14

	Variable Categories			
	LQ	Reading	Spelling	Arithmetic
Var. No.	1	2	3	4
1	1.0000	-0.6540	-0.4468	0.0223
2	-0.6540	1.0000	0.3111	-0.0024
3	-0.4468	0.3111	1.0000	-0.2035
4	0.0223	-0.0024	-0.2035	1.0000
Means	0.919	4.857	5.000	6.429
Std.Dev.	0.099	6.278	8.229	5.460

CORRELATIONS OF LEARNING QUOTIENTS AND
GAIN SCORES ON THE WRAT (5-MONTH PROGRAM)
N=43

	Variable Categories			
	LQ	Reading	Spelling	Arithmetic
Var. No.	1	2	3	4
1	1.0000	0.2092	0.4508	0.1721
2	0.2092	1.0000	0.1874	0.2061
3	0.4508	0.1874	1.0000	0.0409
4	0.1721	0.2061	0.0409	1.0000
Means	0.908	4.953	5.977	4.512
Std.Dev.	0.135	5.726	5.785	8.021

CORRELATIONS OF LEARNING QUOTIENTS AND
GAIN SCORES ON THE WRAT (6-MONTH PROGRAM)
N=20

	Variable Categories			
	LQ	Reading	Spelling	Arithmetic
Var. No.	1	2	3	4
1	1.0000	0.0148	0.3473	0.1215
2	0.0148	1.0000	0.1567	-0.2132
3	0.3473	0.1567	1.0000	-0.1465
4	0.1215	-0.2132	-0.1465	1.0000
Means	0.883	5.000	4.200	4.250
Std.Dev.	0.071	8.608	5.115	5.940

CORRELATIONS OF LEARNING QUOTIENTS AND
GAIN SCORES ON THE WRAT (7-MONTH PROGRAM)
N=85

	Variable Categories			
	LQ	Reading	Spelling	Arithmetic
Var. No.	1	2	3	4
1	1.0000	-0.0308	0.0457	-0.2166
2	-0.0308	1.0000	0.3132	-0.0189
3	0.0457	0.3132	1.0000	-0.0778
4	-0.2166	-0.0189	-0.0778	1.0000
Means	0.895	7.047	4.918	6.518
Std.Dev.	0.116	7.041	6.195	5.745

CORRELATIONS OF LEARNING QUOTIENTS AND
GAIN SCORES ON THE WRAT (8-MONTH PROGRAM)
N=32

	Variable Categories			
	LQ	Reading	Spelling	Arithmetic
Var. No.	1	2	3	4
1	1.0000	-0.3672	0.0789	-0.4227
2	-0.3672	1.0000	0.3244	0.1893
3	0.0789	0.3244	1.0000	0.0087
4	-0.4227	0.1893	0.0087	1.0000
Means	0.854	10.188	5.781	7.750
Std.Dev.	0.111	9.285	7.598	10.533

STUDENT POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS
AND MEAN WRAT GAIN BY MONTH

N	Months (Pre-Post)	Sex[1] Boy	Girl	Ethnicity[1] Anglo	Minority	Handicap Level[1] Mild	Moderate	Severe	Mean WRAT Gain (Months) Reading	Spelling	Arithmetic	Mean IQ
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43	5	74	26	65	35	7	7	86	4.95	6.00	4.51	.91
20	6	75	25	90	10	10	35	55	5.00	4.20	4.25	.88
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Std.Dev.	0.117	7.544	6.440	7.352

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GAIN SCORES ON THE WRAT (4-MONTH PROGRAM)
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	LQ	Reading	Spelling	Arithmetic
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1	1.0000	-0.6540	-0.4468	0.0223
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Var. No.	1	2	3	4
1	1.0000	0.2092	0.4508	0.1721
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GAIN SCORES ON THE WRAT (6-MONTH PROGRAM)
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	Variable Categories			
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Var. No.	1	2	3	4
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Means	0.883	5.000	4.200	4.250
Std.Dev.	0.071	8.608	5.115	5.940

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GAIN SCORES ON THE WRAT (7-MONTH PROGRAM)
N=85

	Variable Categories			
	LQ	Reading	Spelling	Arithmetic
Var. No.	1	2	3	4
1	1.0000	-0.0308	0.0457	-0.2166
2	-0.0308	1.0000	0.3132	-0.0189
3	0.0457	0.3132	1.0000	-0.0778
4	-0.2166	-0.0189	-0.0778	1.0000
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Std.Dev.	0.116	7.041	6.195	5.745

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N=32

	Variable Categories			
	LQ	Reading	Spelling	Arithmetic
Var. No.	1	2	3	4
1	1.0000	-0.3672	0.0789	-0.4227
2	-0.3672	1.0000	0.3244	0.1893
3	0.0789	0.3244	1.0000	0.0087
4	-0.4227	0.1893	0.0087	1.0000
Means	0.854	10.188	5.781	7.750
Std.Dev.	0.111	9.285	7.598	10.533

APPENDIX C

Relevant Data:

Activities

Attitude Changes

As part of the final evaluation, parent questionnaires were sent to each parent whose child participated in the program during the school year. Each parent was asked to respond to seven questions that dealt with their observations of the child as well as feedback of their child from the school. A space was also provided for comments or suggestions by the parents.

The questions asked were as follows:

1. Which of these descriptions best describes your child's feelings about the program?

   a. Participates actively in the program. Shows enthusiasm for program.

   b. Displays no apparent feelings toward the program.

   c. Resents being involved in such a program.

   d. Other

From this, 83.3% of all parents responding to the questionnaire stated their child participated actively in the program and showed enthusiasms for the program; 11.11% stated their child displayed no apparent feeling toward the program; while 6.11% gave "other" as their answer. The most frequent response in this category was, "made children feel people were trying to help them". Other comments made were similar to that above.

2. What benefits do you feel your child has received from the program?

On this question only parent comments were given. Listed are the most frequent statements made by the parents.

Attention span is longer and following orders in all things has improved.

He has come out of his shell.

Is more interested in his work and more serious about it.

Has gained self-confidence.

Easier for her to learn and remember.

Made her feel an equal toward classmates.

Has helped him to catch up and stay with rest of class, also has helped him get over shyness.

Has improved 100% --also thinks better of himself.

She is very enthusiastic about the program and has done very well with it.

She has gained self-confidence.

Has grown out of the baby talk, and is able to let her teacher know what her problems are.

3. What advances do you feel your child has made in the classroom?

Again on this question, comments were asked for. No statistical evaluation can be made. Below is a representational sample of comments given.

The two together (program and classroom) has helped to improve his attention span and has helped him come out of his shell and participate in discussions and activities.

Has improved in reading, math and spelling.

Report card has improved.

Gets along better with others.

Willing to try, doesn't get so upset.

Improved in all areas due to being now able to read.

Ability to keep up with other children in classroom.

4. Do you feel your child's behavior has changed in the classroom since entering the program?

This question concerned not only a yes or no answer, but comments and examples as well. On this question 89% of the parents answered favorably. Comments given follow.

More outgoing.

Interested in school.

Listens better and answers better, questions asked of her.

Does not disrupt class so much.

Has learned to sit still and attention span is much broader.

Just a more healthy attitude because she is not having repeated failures.

Before, she didn't care.

5. Which of these descriptions best describe your own feelings toward the program?

   a. The program is meeting my child's needs and feel he/she should continue in the program.

   b. The program has met a few of my child's needs, but do not feel continuing in the program will help.

   c. The program has not met my child's needs.

   d. Other

On this question, 94% of all parents participating on the questionnaire indicated the program as meeting their child's needs and felt he/she should continue in the program. 6% of the answers given for item d stated the following comments:

Bravo.

Please continue it.

This program and instructors need to be applauded.

He has been in the program for two years and will have to learn to adjust by himself.

I hope they have this in the _____School District.

6. Do you feel your child's behavior has changed at home since participating in the program?

A yes or no response, as well as comments were asked for. On this question 75% answered "yes", and 25% answered "no". Comments were:

She is a little more responsible.

Can concentrate, does more coloring, attitude is better and tries harder.

Is always wanting a book to read or do math problems.

She takes care of her room better and has settled down some.

Seems more mature -- easier to get along with.

7. Do you feel the Resource Center has given adequate help to you as a parent?

All parents answered "yes" to this question. Examples were requested, and the following is a representative sample.

It makes it easier to explain things to him about his school work without confusing him.

We have learned how and why he is having problems with learning.

Through conferences.

By trying to follow ideas and advice, we have been able to guide school and home problems.

I can understand and enjoy my child, now.